

The Individual

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

OCTOBER 1993

Inside...

Articles...

Sir Richard Body
exonerated,
SIF News Up-
date,
Aitken talks
about the pros-
pects for free-
dom,
Who are "the
Bastards"?

S.I.F.

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Let's Slash State Spending

IN the last issue of *The Individual* we called upon Kenneth Clarke, at that time Home Secretary, to liberalise the licensing laws. We are still awaiting action on that front.

Once again we find ourselves issuing a message to Kenneth Clarke, who has now been elevated to Chancellor, en route to a bid for the Premiership. The Government has a debt crisis on its hands. It has three options; 1) to increase taxes, 2) to slash State spending, 3) to do "a little bit of both".

Increasing taxes would be a disaster, and not just for the electoral fortunes of the Tory Party. The crawl out of recession would be halted, the good deeds of the Thatcher years destroyed and a climate hostile to freedom and enterprise fostered. WE SAY "NO" TO TAX INCREASES.

Cutting State spending is the only sound option. However, this would involve not just trimming and penny pinching but a fundamental rethink of the role of the State. Does this Government have the resolve or the ideological impetus to adopt a radical libertarian agenda? Can it overcome opposition from powerful entrenched vested interests?

The worst choice of all would be for the Government to "do a little bit of both". This would be fudging the issue, pushing the problem aside until a more hardcore "rape the rich" Labour government comes in.

The problems facing this country can only really be solved by adopting a radical liberal agenda. Our agenda. Let us seize it.

The Individual

For Your Diary

Thursday 25 November: 6.30 pm: The Annual General Meeting of the Society for individual Freedom will be held at the offices of Forest, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1 (near Victoria station).

Wednesday 1 December: SIF Winter Reception with guest speaker. Contact Mark MacGregor on 071-608-3222.

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Editorial

THE need for a Society which campaigns for less government rather than more is as strong as ever. Margaret Thatcher recently said that "Socialism comes in many guises". How right she is.

The battle against Collectivism did not stop with the privatisation of a few trading organs of the State. The Collectivist mentality is still deeply entrenched in our institutions and social codes. The "political correctness" movement so lucidly described by Marc Glendenning in his speech to the Society is gaining an alarming presence in our universities and work places. Coupled with this, the State increasingly tells us what we should and shouldn't try to eat, drink, think and what interests to pursue. There is even talk about denying smokers the right to certain forms of medical treatment that they have already forcibly paid for by the coercive tax system and extreme levels of duty on tobacco.

The tendency of the enlightened liberal-socialist "chattering classes" to forcibly direct our pursuits and to seek ever more invasive ways of curtailing our liberty must be identified and fought against by the Society. The threat of State Socialism is now replaced by a mass assault from the combined movements of feminism, political correctness, health fascism, environmentalism, Euro-

federalism and the paternalist old guard.

Likewise, the Government has lacked an ideological anchor and has allowed itself to be carried on the tide of vested interests and these currently fashionable Collectivist movements. First it handed over our national sovereignty to a federalist Super-State and now it is hanging over a cliff edge, deciding whether to jump for tax increases, spending cuts or to sway on the edge a little longer and allow Mr. Smith the pleasure of pushing it overboard.

The Tax or Cut debate is going to be not just the crucial political battle of the Autumn but one of the most fundamental philosophical battles in British domestic politics for the last decade. Are our solutions to come from handing more power to the State or through reducing the scope of Government? This battle cannot be seen purely in terms of Government finances but as an expression of the age old tug of war between the individual and the State.

The only men with enough guts in the Government to tackle the problem of Government size have already been called "bastards" by our lucid "classless" Prime Minister. Yet just as the likes of our own Sir Richard Body were insulted for defending our nation against federalism, these men will be fighting for the future of our nation as a free enterprise economy.

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BODY LANGUAGE



Sir Richard Body MP: He stood up for Freedom: will John Major?

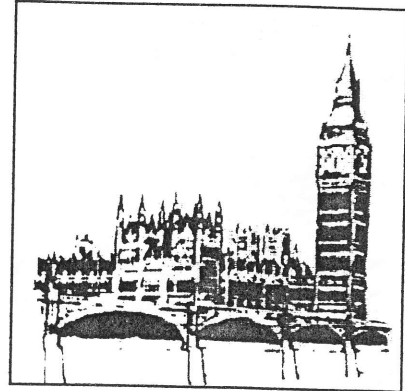
So, our most talented Prime Minister is rumoured to have said that he can "hear the flapping of white coats" when Sir Richard Body MP and other Eurosceptic Tory rebels present their arguments against a Federalist Socialist European Super-State?

What can be more barmy than an allegedly Conservative Prime Minister who would flitter Britain's sovereignty away to an unelected bunch of left-wing foreign bureaucrats, force his country into recession by committing it to a pie-in-the-sky programme of monetary union - and then claim the credit when the ERM collapses and Maastricht crumbles?

Hey nonny nonny Mr. Major!

The Individual

SIF Luncheon at the Lords with Jonathan Aitken MP



LORD Monson was the Society's host at the annual luncheon in the House of Lords on Monday 10 June, when Jonathan Aitken MP, Minister of State for Defence Procurement, was the guest speaker. He spoke on three themes concerning freedom.

Parliament & Freedom

First: Parliament and freedom. Mr. Aitken emphasised that despite the importance of the media the House of Commons was still the great forum of the nation, as has been shown dramatically by some debates and resignation speeches. MPs are very effective in raising grievances of many kinds, some individual and some general; ministers and civil servants are very nervous about Parliamentary criticism of their decisions. He believes that the system of select committees is increasing the influence of back-bench MPs. Although Parliament's power is to some extent being eroded by the European Community this is being countered by John Major's deregulation initiative and Parliament is get-

ting tougher in its responses to the Community.

Press Freedom V Privacy

Second, freedom and the press. Mr. Aitken asked whether the freedom of the press was eroding the freedom of the individual and discussed the need for countervailing pressures against the press, particularly the tabloids. He considered that there was a strong case for protecting the individual from invasions of privacy by anyone - perhaps by making bugging and physical intrusion civil offences.

Defending the Free Nation

Third, freedom and national defence. Mr. Aitken reminded us that protecting the country from foreign attack is still a basic task of government. The policies of the last forty years kept the West free and had culminated in the collapse of Communism: the Russians will not be coming. Yet the world is still very dangerous: there is the possibility of fresh nuclear and chemical threats. It is essential to maintain our defences in re-

sponse to changing needs and not to be too optimistic about the peace dividend and the new international order.

SIF: Vanguards of Liberty

Nonetheless Mr. Aitken ended optimistically about freedom itself. Britain is in the first rank of countries where freedom is cherished, maintained and extended. The Society is a welcome participant in the efforts to ensure that our country remains there.

Mr. Aitken's speech was warmly received by members and their guests. There was a lively exchange of views in the ensuing questions and comments.

ARE WE SENDING
The Individual
TO YOUR CORRECT ADDRESS?

**Please let us know
if you have moved
or if you still wish
to receive mailings
from the SIF**

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Altered States: New Agenda or No Agenda?

by Iain Smedley

ACROSS the political spectrum there is apparent agreement on the primary role of the market, the need to reform the welfare state, empowerment of the citizen, and the political importance of non-economic factors such as quality of service, community and culture. Does this reflect an underlying reality of a new consensus? What is the new agenda that will spring from such a consensus?

Or is the reality that the ideological conflict which characterised the 1980s has been replaced, not with a new shared intellectual foundation for our changed times, but by a technocratic, anti-ideological and grey politics? British politics is perceived to be in crisis; there are accusations of "drift" and lack of direction on both left and right, and widespread dissatisfaction with political elites. Can a "new politics" based on such shaky foundations cope with the new challenges at the end of the millenium?

The 1993-94 Altered States series of meetings invites commentators from right and left, and from outside the conven-

tional political discourse, to analyse and debate these issues.

1 November: New Agenda or No Agenda?

Are the politics of the 1990s less ideological than those of the 1980s? Has the Tory Party



returned to its traditional stereotype as a non-ideological party? Are new ideas required for the new agenda, or is a technocratic response more appropriate? What can we learn from the economics of politics about the role of vested interests? How are ideas generated and turned into policy?

10 January: the Altered State of the Economy

What are the limits of the eco-

nomic consensus? When global markets appear more powerful than nation states, does it still make sense to think of economic policy in national terms? How will politics respond to new patterns of work and leisure? Can a partnership of government and industry be anything more than a reincarnation of failed corporatism?

7 March: The Altered Welfare State

What can be done about the underclass? Is the welfare state a bourgeois racket? Is universal welfare sustainable, either morally or financially? Is the dependency culture the inevitable result of welfare provision?

2 May: The Altered State of the Social Fabric

Does the disintegration of shared cultural values inevitably lead to disorder? Is the new debate on crime and morality a genuine problem or just another moral panic? Has Britain's social fabric suffered from too much laissez-faire or not enough?

If you wish further details about these meetings contact Iain Smedley on 071-387-8687.

The Individual

SIF NEWS UPDATE

Peter Campbell to Step Down as Chairman

Chairman of the SIF Executive Committee, Professor Peter Campbell, has announced that he will not be seeking re-election at the Society's next AGM. Family concerns are dominating his agenda and he is no longer able to serve the Society as he would wish.

Peter is a passionate defender of freedom, a stalwart of the Society, and we shall always be grateful for his unflinching support.

New Meetings Programme Planned

SIF Vice-Chairman Mark MacGregor has taken over the responsibility for organising the Society's regular speaker meetings.

For some while the Committee has been concerned at the poor levels of attendance at the evening meetings. Mark has decided to totally revamp these meetings to make the appeal to potential recruits.

The meetings will take a theme-based approach (such as "freedom & popular culture") and will be held at a new venue, the

New Cavendish Club. To make these events more sociable a buffet supper will be served prior to the lecture. For more details contact Mark MacGregor on 071-608-3222.

The Power to Destroy

In the last issue of *The Individual* we mentioned that the Society was publishing a book by Professor David Myddleton called "The Power to Destroy" on the subject of taxation. This book was originally due for release in April but has been setback by numerous delays.

The Society's publications committee now intends to delay publication until February 1994 so as to enable the text to be revised to take account of the policies arising from the appointment of the non-Thatcherite Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke.

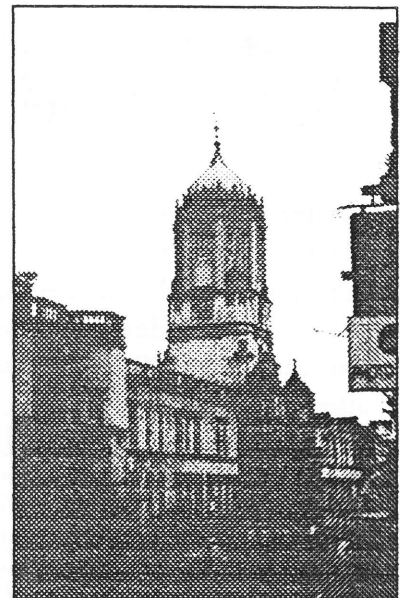
Oxford & Cambridge Groups Formed

The Society has been active in supporting freedom-orientated campaigns in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

It is widely known that these two elite universities provide Britain with a large percentage

of its opinion formers and political leaders. The Society has therefore played a role in supporting the campaigns of two like-minded student groups, the Oxford Laissez-Faire Club and the Cambridge Free Society. Donations from members of the SIF Committee have enabled the production of a leaflet entitled "Calling All Freedom Lovers" and some support for Freshers Fayres. The campaigns have been co-ordinated by SIF Secretary Douglas Smith who has liaised closely with Malcolm Hutty of Merton College, Oxford and Miss Bunny Galloway of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Should you wish to make a donation to the student campaign you should contact the SIF office on 071-608-3222.



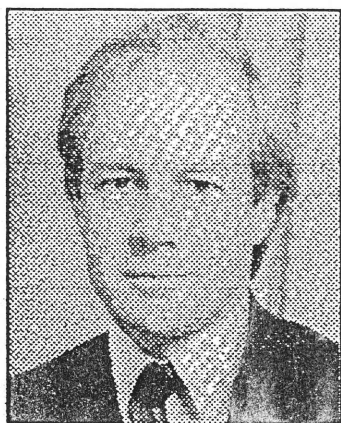
Christchurch, Oxford: Training Ground for the British Political Elite

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Who are "The Bastards"?

JOHN Major has described his free market Euro-sceptic ministers as "bastards". The Individual identifies these heroes for freedom as none other than Michael Portillo, Peter Lilley, John Redwood and Neil Hamilton.

Rt. Hon Peter Lilley MP
Secretary of State for Social Security



Peter Lilley is the most senior "bastard" in the Government. He is also widely reputed to be the "most Thatcherite member of the Cabinet". He entered Parliament in the 1970s after two attempts to block his adoption as a Conservative candidate by Edward Heath.

Exceptionally dry he is in favour of far reaching privatisation and other free-market reforms. At the last two Con-

servative Conferences he has made fiercely anti-federalist speeches. His radical views make him the best man to reform the Welfare State.

Rt Hon Michael Portillo MP
Chief Secretary to the Treasury



At 40 years old Michael Portillo is undoubtedly the rising star of the New Right. He is regularly spoken of as a future Prime Minister and therefore is the free-market Right's best hope. Many observers regard him as too young to take over yet.

Charged with cutting expenditure he has the opportunity to radically reform the State but will face intense opposition from other spendthrift ministers who do not share his libertarian beliefs.

Rt Hon John Redwood MP:
Secretary of State for Wales



John Redwood is the leading intellectual free-marketeer in the Government. A former Fellow of All Souls, Oxford he has written widely on the workings of Capitalism.

Neil Hamilton MP:
Minister for Deregulation



Neil Hamilton is the soundest junior minister. He allegedly once said that he found it confusing being both a Government Minister and an Anarchist! He is responsible for cutting red tape.